

APPROVED MINUTES

Human Rights Commission

Monday, May 18, 2015

5:30 PM

**McLeod Conference Room
1800 West Old Shakopee Road**

I. PROCEDURAL MATTERS – 5:30 P.M.

- 1.1 Call to Order and Roll Call** Present: Whitney Batterson (5:31 p.m.), John Doble, Sheila Fishman (5:32 p.m.), Dennis Kane, Jessica Kietzman, Daniela Kunkel, Jared Leese (5:35 p.m.), Johnathon McClellan, Ibrahim Yusuf
- Staff: Lorinda Pearson, Manager and Staff Liaison, Human Services Division
Heather Lambert, Administrative Assistant, Human Services Division
- Guests: Jamie Verbrugge, City Manager, City of Bloomington
Jon Oleson, City Councilmember, City of Bloomington
Bill Reichert
- Chair D. Kane called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was present.
- 1.2 Approval of Minutes** M/J. McClellan, S/J. Kietzman unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2015 meeting.
- 1.3 Adoption of Agenda** M/J. McClellan, S/W. Batterson unanimously carried to approve the agenda as presented.
- 1.4 Oath of Office - Ibrahim Yusuf** I. Yusuf read and signed his Oath of Office for a term ending December 31, 2016. The Commissioners went around the table and introduced themselves.
- 1.5 Announcements** D. Kane stated the Minnesota River Valley Land Use Study that was discussed at the April 20, 2015 regular meeting will go before the City Council tonight, May 18, 2015.
- D. Kane announced the Minnesota Twins will be hosting Diversity Day on July 7, 2015 at 7:10 p.m. at Target Field. A flyer for this event was emailed to Commissioners.
- D. Kane stated a Japanese Lantern Lighting Festival will take place on August 23, 2015 at Como Park in St. Paul. A save the date postcard was shared with Commissioners.

II. PROGRAM – 5:35 P.M.

- 2.1** D. Kane introduced new City of Bloomington City Manager Jamie Verbrugge, who started in February. City Manager Verbrugge stated he has been impressed with the work the Human Rights Commission has been performing, specifically mentioning the community events the Commission has hosted during the short time he has been here. He attended the film screening of “Documented” on April 28, 2015, an event sponsored by the League of Women Voters and the Joint Community Police Partnership, and was impressed with community attendance.
- Councilmember Jon Oleson, who represents Bloomington residents in the 4th District, joined City Manager Verbrugge in complimenting the work of the HRC. Councilmember Oleson stated he plans to attend as many HRC

meetings as he is able. He attended Kite Day on May 16, 2015 and found it to be a diverse, and successful, community event.

City Manager Verbrugge stated he served as City Manager in Brooklyn Park for the last seven years. Brooklyn Park has undergone significant demographic changes over the last two decades, and he foresees a similar pattern in Bloomington. He described how the changes caused a break down in the social fabric of the community. Brooklyn Park responded by working closely with the faith community and local non-profit organizations to have intentional conversations with the goal of becoming "a community of communities". It was necessary to repair people's connections to one another at the neighborhood level for the community to regain its sense of safety and security.

The community of Bloomington is turning over, and the make-up of neighborhoods is changing and becoming more diverse. City Manager Verbrugge stated the Human Rights Commission can play an active role in making and maintaining connections at the neighborhood level. This will help to create strong relationships for residents and assist when they seek services.

City Manager Verbrugge gave a brief overview of the State of the City, which took place on March 18, 2015. He stated there is a strong commercial tax base for residents and excellent City services are provided at a reasonable cost.

S. Fishman asked about ideas on how to encourage the community to use services they may need. City Manager Verbrugge stated the HRC may embrace the role of setting the environment for open conversations in which information on these services could be shared. He spoke of the importance of staging conversations in a welcoming and inviting way and creating an environment where difficult conversations can be conducted in a safe manner. One successful example he provided of this was the community conversation "It's Time to Talk About Race" he attended on May 9, 2015 at Kennedy High School.

City Manager Verbrugge stated Councilmembers have recognized the need to start looking at legacy issues within the City. At the community ages, it is necessary to make sure certain areas are not being left behind in terms of investment. This is timely as staff recommendations are being brought forth at tonight's City Council meeting to increase investment in programs that allow homeowners to reinvest in the community.

L Pearson stated transitional housing and shelter for the homeless are current hot topics, bubbling up from grassroots level in Bloomington and surrounding areas. City Manager Verbrugge stated the first step in finding a solution to the homeless issue is to create awareness and to raise visibility in the community homelessness exists. Once awareness is created, talk of solutions may begin. Per the Bloomington School District, there are 130 students who are homeless on any given night. Oasis for Youth is a Bloomington organization providing these students services. City Manager Verbrugge stated the City of Edina recently approved transitional housing for homeless youth, and on his last day of work at Brooklyn Park, he attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for a youth homeless shelter within the City.

City Manager Verbrugge stated previous City Manager Mark Bernhardtson did many fantastic things for Bloomington over the 23 years he was City Manager, including the City achieving and maintaining a Triple-A bond rating from all three major ratings agencies, one of only 27 cities in the nation to do so. City Manager Verbrugge stated he views his role in the City as a

facilitator and a connector and he plans to use his first year at Bloomington building relationships with the City Council, Executive Staff and key leaders in the community.

III. CONTINUING BUSINESS – 6:15 P.M.

3.1 2015 Work Plan

- Public Relations
 - Re-cap “Documented”

J. Kietzman stated “Documented”, a film about an undocumented immigrant, was screened on April 28, 2015 at Bloomington Civic Plaza. The event was sponsored by the League of Women Voters and the Joint Community Police Partnership with the purpose of starting a conversation about undocumented immigrants. The event was well-attended.
 - Youth Homeless Community Forum

D. Kane stated he attended the Youth Homeless Community Forum on May 2, 2015, at Normandale Hylands United Methodist Church, sponsored by the League of Women Voters. There was discussion on who is homeless, what agencies do to help the homeless, and what we all can do to assist the homeless. L. Pearson, who was also in attendance, stated homeless is not a person, it is a condition.
 - It's Time To Talk About Race, Community Conversation

D. Kane stated he attended a community conversation on May 9, 2015 entitled “It's Time To Talk About Race” at Kennedy High School. L. Pearson attended and stated the importance of continuing the discussion about race and building relationships.
 - Re-cap Diversity Day Activities
 - City Council Presentation
 - School Board Presentation
 - Booth Volunteers

J. Doble was at the City Council recognition of the t-shirt logo design winner on April 20, 2015 and stated the award winner was proud. J. Leese was at the School Board recognition on April 26, 2015 and he was impressed with the strong support of the School Board. W. Batterson stated there were no issues with the Diversity Day booths at Jefferson High School on May 1, 2015 and the students liked the pens handed out by the HRC. J. Kietzman reported there was a lot of traffic at the HRC Diversity Day Booth at Kennedy High School. The keynote speaker for Diversity Day was Kevin Kling. He was introduced by D. Kunkel at Jefferson High School and J. Kietzman at Kennedy High School. D. Kane stated Diversity Day is taking place at Olson Middle School on May 22, 2015 and J. Kietzman and J. McClellan will work the HRC booth.
 - JHS Diversity Committee

D. Kunkel reported the JHS Diversity Committee signed thank you letters for everyone who helped with Diversity Day. A copy of the thank you to the HRC was included in Commissioner packets.
 - Re-cap Community Enrichment Fair

S. Fishman and D. Kane worked the HRC booth at the Community Enrichment Fair at Kennedy High School on April 23, 2015. S. Fishman stated the event was not well attended, and D. Kane commented the arrangement of the event was very spread out.
 - Re-cap OEE Family Unity Day 2015

J. Kietzman and J. Doble represented the HRC at the OEE Family Unity Day at Oak Grove Middle School on April 25, 2015. J. Kietzman stated there was a steady stream of visitors and J. Doble reported he offered the mediation brochure to a few people.
- Equality
 - Re-cap Thurgood Marshall Events
 - Kennedy High School
 - Jefferson High

D. Kane attended the Thurgood Marshall event at Kennedy High School on April 20, 2015, featuring five attorneys of color. Similar events took place at Jefferson High School on April 24, 2015 and at a School District General Assembly on April 29, 2015. The City event featuring a screening of “Mr. Civil Rights: Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP”, with a panel discussion, took place on May 12, 2015. D. Kane stated he received positive feedback

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School ••School District General Assembly ••City Event | <p>from attendees, and believes the HRC grew its networking capabilities by sponsoring the event.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •• 25th Anniversary of ADA events | <p>D. Kane stated planning is taking place for events associated with the 25th Anniversary of the ADA. L. Pearson confirmed there will be a community event.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Competence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •• "Transfer of Memory" Exhibit •••Community Event | <p>D. Kane stated the "Transfer of Memory" exhibit is currently at Bloomington Civic Plaza, and will be there through May 25, 2015. A community event, featuring Holocaust Survivor Fred Amram, will take place on May 19, 2015. J. Leese, S. Fishman, J. Kietzman, D. Kane and W. Batterson volunteered to work the community event.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •• Heritage Days | <p>D. Kane stated Heritage Days will take place on September 19, 2015. Committee members are needed to determine cultural entertainment options, as well as work the HRC booth. J. Leese, J. Doble and S. Fishman volunteered to look at the cultural entertainment options, and J. Doble, W. Batterson, D. Kane, J. Kietzman, J. Leese (available in the afternoon) and I. Yusuf (available in the morning) volunteered to work the day of the event. L. Pearson stated a location for Heritage Days is still being determined.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •• PACER'S Unity Awards •••Booth Volunteers | <p>J. Kietzman reported she has attended a planning meeting for PACER's Unity Awards taking place on June 9, 2015 at Bloomington Civic Plaza. The Youth Advisory Board for this event is currently collecting applications for the awards. This is an opportunity to support youth in the community who are champions in the area of anti-bullying. J. McClellan and J. Kietzman volunteered to work this event, as did J. Leese, who is available after 6:30 p.m.</p> |

IV. OTHER BUSINESS – 6:40 P.M.

- 4.1 Election of Officers** Ballots for the Chair, First Vice-Chair and Second Vice-Chair were distributed and collected. The Commission unanimously approved the following officers to a term that extends through May 2016.

Dennis Kane as Chair
 Jessica Kietzman as First Vice-Chair
 Whitney Batterson as Second Vice-Chair

V. NEW BUSINESS – 6:50 P.M.

- 5.1 Proclamation, June 2015, "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month"** D. Kane stated a Proclamation for LGBT Pride Month, June 1 – 30, 2015, has been written and is included in Commissioner packets. J. Doble noted two letters in the document had been transposed. M/J. McClellan, S/D. Kunkel carried to approve the Proclamation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride month as corrected, with J. Doble and I. Yusuf abstaining from the vote.

L. Pearson stated many groups have asked the City to have Proclamations, and listed International Day of Peace, Human Rights Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month as some of the Proclamations recently accepted by the HRC. D. Kane indicated the Proclamations created awareness about Human Rights issues.

B. Reichert commented that some in the faith community may find this Proclamation objectionable.

VI. FINAL COMMENTS

L. Pearson referred Commissioners to a handout from the Sun Current about “A Peace of My Mind”, a traveling photographic exhibit, which is currently on view at the Hennepin County Government Center through the end of May. The HRC will be sponsoring this Exhibit in September at Bloomington Civic Plaza, as well as hosting a community event with the Exhibit creator, John Noltner. W. Batterson stated the Exhibit had been displayed in her school library, and highly recommends it.

J. Doble stated he attended a human trafficking event sponsored by the Richfield Human Rights Commission on May 16, 2015.

D. Kane announced previous Commissioner Mary Rice is now the Vice President (President-Elect) of the League of Women Voters. She served on the HRC from January 2009 – December 2014.

VII. ADJOURNMENT – 7:00 P.M.

M/S. Fishman, S/J. Leese unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m.